

## RESPONSES TO ARTICLES

Our entire membership in Japan responded quickly to the note in the May Bulletin about the stamp shown as Figure 7 on the Perfin Page of the Month.

Figure 7 showed what Member Bob Schwerdt thought was a Japanese revenue stamp with a Perfin pattern not listed by Dr. Adachi in his catalog.

Dr. Adachi, Hiroshi Maeda, and Fr. Gabriel Groleau all provided the answer to the mystery in letters to Secretary Floyd Walker. (Similar answers previously received from George Fisher, Jr., and Major William Collyer, were published in the July-August Bulletin.)

As indicated by each of these five members, the "stamp" is not a stamp, but a label or seal. It is one of the seals used by the post office to officially seal registration or cash-mailing envelopes. Two such seals are affixed to the flap of the envelope so that half the stamp is on the flap and half is on the rest of the envelope (see Figure 1). The sender then applies his "chop" or rubber stamp signature to the edges of the envelope and the flap. It is thus absolutely impossible to open the envelope---and gain access to the contents---without disturbing the seal.

The Perfin is one used by the Posts and Telecommunications Department and appears to be designed primarily to destroy the seal if any attempt is made to separate seal from envelope.

Dr. Adachi noted that the pattern is not listed because it is on a seal and not on a stamp, in the same way that U. S. revenue patterns are not listed in our U. S. catalog.

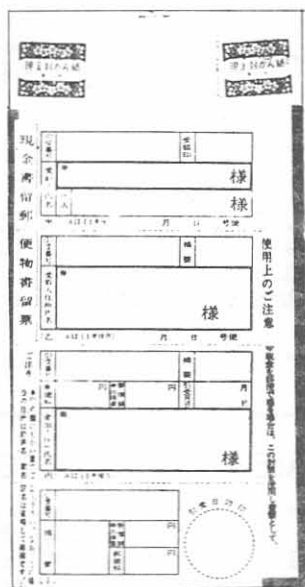


Figure 1 - reverse of registry envelope (much reduced)

(Editor's note: as an added point of philatelic interest, beyond Perfins, this Japanese registry system bears some similarity to the system used in the United States in the 1870's when each registered letter was placed in a large, heavy post office envelope for transmission through the mails. A post office seal (Scott #OX1) was applied in similar manner to the Japanese seal described above, and struck with a handstamp showing the date and place of mailing. The reverse of the envelope contained a "Record of Transit" space in which each clerk who handled the envelope had to indicate its condition and write his name and the date. Figure 2 shows a much reduced photo of one of the U.S. registry envelopes. Its actual size is 5-1/8 x 10-1/4 inches.)

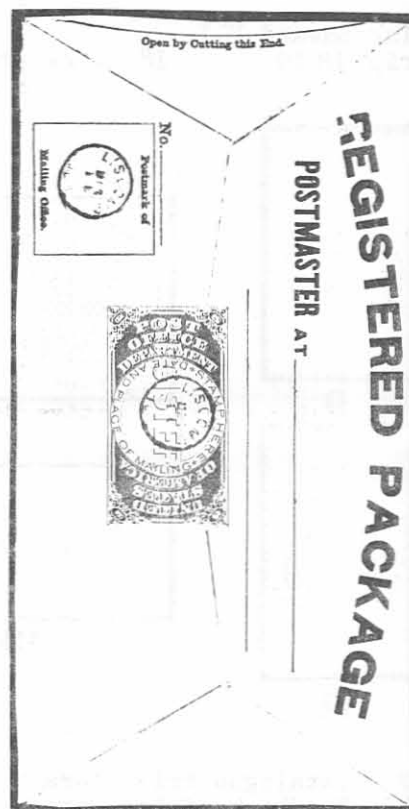


Figure 2 - U.S. registry envelope with post office seal (much reduced)

(Further editor's note: occasionally, as in the above example, the publication of Perfin data may bring forth other philatelic information which is not directly related to Perfins. The editor believes this type of information may be of interest to members, as long as it is not overdone. However, if any members disagree and feel that the Bulletin should be devoted absolutely to Perfins information, the editor would be interested in hearing from them.